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# Open to God: Hope & Mission

## Studies in Luke

... so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed (Luke 1:4).

### INTRODUCTION & GUIDE

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Bible Study 1: Mission Manifesto. [Luke 4: 16 - 30.](#)

Bible Study 2: Hope for the Despised. [Luke 5: 27 - 32.](#)

Bible Study 3: Hope for the Shameless. [Luke 7: 36 - 50.](#)

Bible Study 4: Hope for the Rebel. [Luke 15: 11 - 31.](#)

Bible Study 5: Hope for the Poor. [Luke 16: 19 - 31.](#)

Bible Study 6: Hope beyond Death. [Luke 23: 26 - 49.](#)

Bible Study 7: Hope for the Hopeless. [Luke 24: 13 - 35.](#)

*[Note: to avoid copyright problems, fresh translations from the Greek text are used in these studies. Occasionally, alternative translations are given for particular words (eg. release/forgiveness), to help enrich our understanding of the text. Compare these translations as you read with the range of meanings offered in the various published Bibles.]*

## Reading the Bible Together

### A living word . . .

God's word is a living word (2 Cor 3:6) to be heard, read, discussed and applied in community. The earliest followers of Jesus included many who could not even read, but they would regularly hear the Psalms and other Jewish Scriptures, the Gospels and Paul's letters read to them by visiting teachers moving between the house churches. Whatever else you might do in your Bible Study and Cell Groups, make sure you read big slabs of Luke together out loud. Make it lively. Assign parts to each other and read with passion. The Word of God will not return empty!

### . . . not a dead letter

Too often we try to reduce our Bible study to simple, one-dimensional answers. Too often we are afraid to ask the hard questions, as if we are scared we might not know the answers. Good Bible study is fearless and leaves some questions open. How can the Spirit move if we think we already know what the text ought to say? In a loving, supportive group we are empowered to ask 'the dumb question', 'the doubting question' and even make 'the heretical suggestion'. Perfect love casts out fear, and God's Spirit moves when we speak openly and honestly with each other. These studies will not always leave you with neat, clear answers to every question — the truth (Lk 1:4) is far more wonderful than that!

### Bible study for all ages!

Five of the seven studies integrate with the Sample Services from the previous section of this resource, so that your Church can plan activities and studies involving ALL ages. The '5 C' method



connect



context



content



consider



consequences

we use here follows Beth Barnett's method used earlier so you can mix and match activities and ideas to suit YOUR Church community. Be creative! At least one of your studies/activity days should involve a meal for everyone, since Luke is a Gospel that emphasises the importance of eating together.

## Readings in Luke for Hope and Mission

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Poet and Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke* (combined edition), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

- written by someone who grew up in Palestine.
- full of insights into the culture of the Mediterranean world and how this informs our Bible reading.

Byrne, Brendan. *The hospitality of God: A reading of Luke's Gospel*. Strathfield: St Pauls, 2000.

- written by local Jesuit scholar of international renown.
- a wonderful overview of Luke's Gospel and the theme of hospitality.

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

- written by a NT Professor at Fuller Seminary.
- a very clear and insightful commentary on Luke.

Karris, Robert J. *Eating Your Way Through Luke's Gospel*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006.

- a reading of Luke focussing on the meal scenes through the Gospel.

Levine, Amy-Jill (Ed). *A Feminist Companion to Luke*. London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

- There are more named women in Luke than any other Gospel — but are all the stories liberating?
- This book explores the Gospel from a feminist perspective — challenging reading!

Neyrey, Jerome (Ed). *The social world of Luke-Acts*. Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1991.

- a very helpful collection of articles exploring the social and cultural background to Luke-Acts.

Reid, Barbara E. *Choosing the better part? Women in the Gospel of Luke*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1996.

- A more user friendly approach to the women in Luke's Gospel.

Trainor, Michael. *According to Luke: insights for contemporary pastoral practice*. Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1992.

- written by a well-known Adelaide scholar.
- explores the pastoral dimensions of Luke's concerns for his hearers/readers.